

Washington, D.C. - Rep. Charlie Wilson (D-OH) today voted to approve sweeping legislation to protect America and invest in homeland security. The Homeland Security Appropriations bill was approved by a vote of 268-150. The legislation makes border security a top priority, provides additional border patrol agents for the country, provides first responders with additional training and equipment, improves aviation and port security, and includes strong accountability measures in order to ensure that taxpayer dollars are being well spent.

"Congress must help protect our communities," said Wilson. "I'm proud to support legislation that makes border security a top priority and gives our first responders needed tools and resources."

The 2008 Homeland Security Appropriations bill:

- Includes funding for 3,000 additional Border Patrol agents, bringing the number of Border Patrol agents to 17,819.
- Rejects the President's proposed \$1 billion cut for training and equipment for first responders and instead expands support for local law enforcement personnel, firefighters and other first responders.
- Invests in port security by significantly increasing funding to protect critical port facilities and infrastructure.
- Improves aviation security by providing funding for new explosive detection systems at airports and funding to double the amount of cargo screened on passenger aircraft.

The legislation approved by the House today also includes strong oversight provisions to ensure the careful spending of taxpayers' dollars by the Department of Homeland Security and eliminates wasteful no-bid contracts.

"The American people expect their dollars to be spent on important efforts to secure our nation, not wasted on no-bid contracts," added Wilson.

For the first time ever the Homeland Security Appropriations bill includes a Davis-Bacon provision. That provision requires that all federal grant and contract funds are only used for projects that pay federal contract workers no less than the local prevailing wage.

"Democrats stood up for American workers today," said Wilson

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